Union Theological College

Ethical Approval for Undergraduate Programme

Ethical Approval for UG Programme

For research involving human participants, staff and students will be required to complete an Application for Ethical Approval form (Appendix 1), the purpose of which is to review whether there are any potentially significant ethical risks.

The form must initially be sent to the relevant supervisor and may be signed off at level 1. If a student application is signed off at level 1, the Faculty ethics representative must be notified. Student applications which cannot be approved at level 1 must be sent to the Faculty ethics representative to decide whether they can be signed off at level 2, or should be considered by the Ethics Sub-Committee at level 3.

Level 1 – Consideration

A low risk is defined as one where potential harm to participants is no greater than that encountered in everyday life. It also includes research where the researcher(s) are working with participants from vulnerable groups (in line with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006) but will not be alone with them at any time i.e. they will be overseen at all times by an experienced individual who holds an AccessNI check undertaken within the last 3 years, and will not be storing images, videos or personal details of children under 18 years of age.

Level 2 – Consideration

A medium risk is defined as one where potential harm to participants is greater than that encountered in everyday life. It also includes research where the researcher(s) are working with participants from vulnerable groups and/or they will be storing images, videos or personal details of children under 18 years of age, but they have produced satisfactory AccessNI check(s) on themselves undertaken within the last 3 years.

Level 3 – Detailed Consideration

This applies to activities that require careful scrutiny due to their potential for physical or psychological harm. A high risk is defined as one where there is a possibility that significant harm will be caused to participants (e.g. an adverse reaction to a drug or supplement, physical damage/injury, psychological or emotional harm). It also includes research where the researcher(s) will be alone with participants from vulnerable groups and/or will be storing images, videos or personal details of children under 18 years of age. It is most unlikely that such an activity would be permitted for an undergraduate extended essay.

Approval Form and Checklist for Ethics Review Involving Human Participants

The College is committed to ensuring that all research undertaken by its staff and students is conducted to the highest standards of integrity. Central to this is the consideration of ethical issues arising from research involving human participants and data. The College's policy is that all such research should undergo appropriate ethical scrutiny, to ensure that the rights, dignity, safety and well-being of all those involved are protected.

This research ethics approval form and checklist should be completed for **every research project that involves human participants.** It is used to determine the amount of risk of harm entailed in a proposed study and to identify whether an application for ethical approval needs to be submitted.

Ethical approval, where required, must be obtained before potential participants are approached to take part in any research.

Student Name: **Date:**

Title of Proposed Study:

		Yes	No
1	Does the study involve human participants or data?	☐	☐
2	Are you sourcing participants or data through an external source?	☐	☐
3	Does the study involve participants who are particularly vulnerable or unable to give informed consent? (e.g. children, people with learning disabilities)	☐	☐
4	Will the study require the co-operation of a gatekeeper for initial access to the groups or individuals to be recruited? (e.g. students at school, members of self-help group)	☐	☐
5	Will it be necessary for participants to take part in the study without their knowledge and consent at the time? (e.g., covert observation of people in non-public places)	☐	☐
6	Will the study involve the discussion of sensitive topics (e.g. sexual activity, drug use)?	☐	☐
7	Could the study induce psychological stress or anxiety or cause harm or negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in normal life?	☐	☐
8	Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants?	☐	☐
9	Will the study involve the recruitment of patients or their relatives/carers through Health and Social Care?	☐	☐
10	Will the study involve patients who are cared for in private and voluntary sector nursing homes and/or residents of residential care homes (Northern Ireland only)?	☐	☐

ACTIONS AND APPROVAL

Approved by Module Supervisor: YES/NO
Refer to Faculty Ethics Supervisor – YES/NO

Signed
Date

Approved by Faculty Ethics Supervisor – YES/NO
Refer to Ethics Sub-Committee – YES/NO

Signed:
Date:

Approved by Ethics Sub-Committee – YES/NO

Signed:
Date: